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ABSTRACT

This guide contains the "Work It Out" simulation, which is pertinent to a variety of curriculum areas, both academic and vocational. The purpose of "Work It Out" is to introduce the student to work-related problem situations and to promote skills in identifying alternatives when solving problems. Part I discusses use of the simulation, i.e., responding to the various situations that are presented on colored cards to be chosen at random. Preparation of the cards on which the situations are printed is also detailed. Three responding techniques are suggested and described: brainstorming, role playing, and panel discussion. Part II contains the situation cards, which should be cut out, sorted according to color and placed in three separate containers corresponding to the three categories in which the situations take place: "You and Your Boss" (yellow); "You and Your Fellow Worker" (blue); and "You and Your Family and Friends" (green). Lists of the situations are provided. (YLB)

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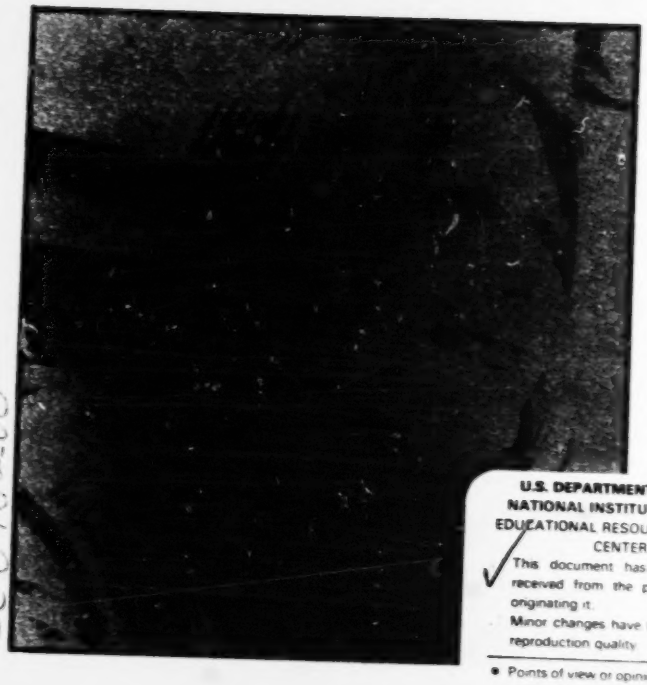
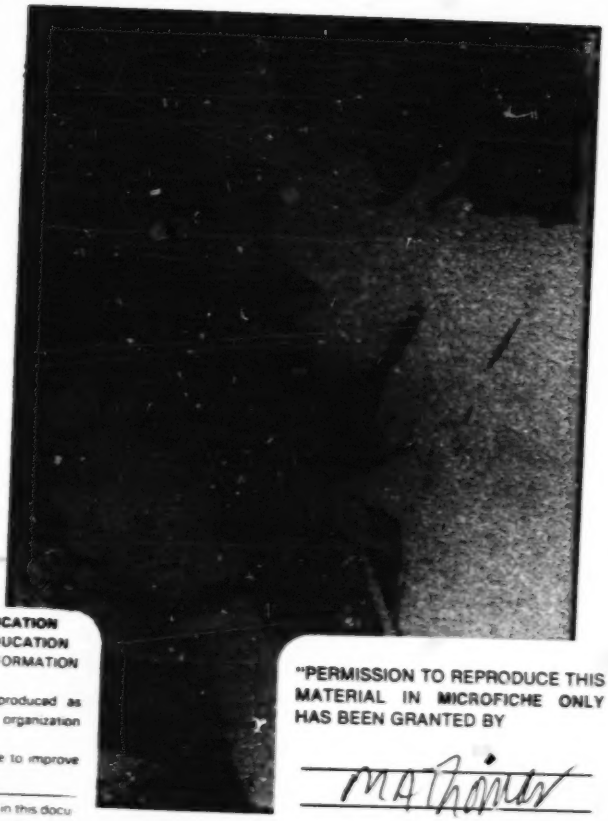
WORK IT OUT:

A STUDENT GUIDE





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PART II — JOB RELATED SITUATIONS

PART I

Simulation Description and Responding Techniques

Work It Out

The simulation "Work It Out" touches on valid concerns of workers, employers, parents and educators. The career readiness emphasis of "Work It Out" is pertinent to a variety of curriculum areas both academic and vocational.

This Student Guide contains the "Work It Out" simulation. Remove the colored pages in Part II and cut along the guidelines. To increase durability, laminate the pages before cutting.

The three different colors of the cards represent the categories in which the situations take place. Yellow represents <u>You and Your Boss</u>; blue represents <u>You and Your Fellow Worker</u>; and green represents <u>You and Your Family and Friends</u>. Sort the situation cards according to color and place them in three different containers. (A useful project is to have your class make containers to hold the situation cards. Label each one with the respective category.) Place the color cards in their corresponding category container.

Then ask a student to draw a card from one of the containers. Either the student or the teacher reads the work-related situation and states the category from which it was drawn. Students respond to the situation presented on the card by brainstorming, role playing or panel discussion.

There are no rigid "right" answers to most situations presented. "Work It Out" introduces the student to work-related problem situations and promotes skills in identifying alternatives when problem solving. This allows students to explore the variety of responses that might be made in any given situation, and to speculate on the consequences of that response. This freedom to explore ideas leads to accepting the opinions of others and creates a supportive atmosphere for interaction in the classroom.

Students may come up with their own situations to present to the class for which they would like a solution. Have them state the problem aloud to the class or write it on paper. Students respond by using any of the methods already suggested.

Responding Techniques

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an approach to creative problem solving that can be used by either one person or a group. Both fun and easy to teach, it can be applied to all kinds of situations. It is applicable to real-life situations and is a must for mature mental functioning. This makes it a useful tool to teach. Use brainstorming in the classroom to stimulate thought.

First state, identify or clarify the need or the problem. Next, participants generate as many alternative solutions as possible, being careful not to evaluate any of them. At this point all solutions are as good as any other—the more solutions the better. Allow imagination to run freely. A way to teach this procedure is to present a non-threatening problem for which everyone in the class will have some solutions. For example, say: "List as many ways as you can think of to use a brick," or "How many uses can you think of for a coat hanger?" or "How many uses can you find for a piece of cloth?" Two approaches which might be used are: (1) have each student make a list of solutions individually, and then combine them all; or (2) have each child call out uses, and write them on the board. REMEMBER NOT TO ALLOW ANY CRITICISM OR EVALUATION OF SOLUTIONS.

When the class is familiar with the process, address increasingly difficult, real-life problems such as strategies for success, finding a job, and so on. The more complex the problem, the harder it will be to solve.

When serious personal problems are involved, the student may not be able to generate alternatives. You can start the thought exploration process by asking, "What is the worst possible thing that could happen?" List all of the horrible, disastrous possibilities named. Than ask, "What is the best possible thing that could happen?" List the most idealistic, unrealistic outcomes. Finally ask, "What else could happen?" or "What is most likely to happen?"

This leads to the next step in problem solving — predicting the outcomes of each solution. Prioritize the solutions according to how they fit between the most acceptable and least acceptable outcomes. Choose the solution that comes closest to meeting all the criteria imposed by the problem. For group problem solving, choose the solution upon which all members of the group can agree. There are numerous ways that groups arrive at decisions. Three ways are: (1) the group leader decides; (2) the majority of the group rules; (3) the group arrives at a concensus. A concensus is the solution selected as acceptable to everyone, although it may be no one's favorite. This process is time-consuming. You may wish to reserve brainstorming to important issues, questions to which the answers are not readily apparent or issues about which there is conflict.

On a personal, internal level, brainstorming is a desirable method of approaching all unfamiliar situations, new problems and problems for which old solutions don't seem to work.

Creative Problem Solving

1. Identify and clarify the problem.

2. Brainstorm.

3. Prioritize the solutions by predicting outcomes.

4. Decide on "best" solution.

5. Try solution, evaluate results, and if it doesn't work — go back to step 1.

Role Playing

Role playing is a form of improvisation in which a situation is set up to which the students devise an ending. The activity allows a participant to express an opinion or a belief about a situation without having to be committed to that particular point of view. This enables the class to observe the interaction of alternative points of view and alternative outcomes. Secondary benefits are that the students practice presenting their ideas verbally and gain valuable feedback from their peers.

Some points to consider in order to make role playing a pleasurable and valuable experience are:

1. Present the situations so that each student knows what his or her character's OBJECTIVE is. The students should understand what each character is trying to accomplish. Provide as much setting as necessary to make the objective clear, but no more than that.
2. Keep the players as close to the rest of the class as the situation allows. Sitting at desks is less threatening than standing in front of the class. Positions should approximate the real-life situation.
3. Many good role playing situations may last for only a few seconds or a few sentences. Don't try to stretch them out. Be sensitive to the point at which the situation "runs out of steam" or "takes a wrong turn." Let different people play the scene in different ways.
4. Emphasize the points made in the process. After each segment of the role play, ask, "What happened?" or "What did you see going

on?" The message, not the presentation, is the focus of role playing. DO NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO CRITICIZE OTHER STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE. ·Ask othe students to do the same scene another way.

5. In some situations, keep one student in a set role and have other students react to that same student so the class can compare how different people respond to a set situation.
6. When all points of view have been presented, or when time is up, reemphasize the points of importance; summarize.

Panel Discussion

Panel discussion is a technique for generating and clarifying different points of view on a given topic. It usually involves a moderator and three or four panelists. If at all possible, the moderator should be a student. This is less threatening for the students and releases the teacher to take notes on the process, plan the next activity or facilitate attentiveness. Panel discussions work well because there is group involvement, peer-reinforced structure, and few rules.

Be sure to select a topic about which students share some common information or opinions. An unfamiliar topic will not be successfully clarified using this approach. A panel discussion is not a debate, and the participants should keep in mind that their objective is not to prove the other panel members wrong or to convince them that one is right. It is instead an opportunity to present a point of view to an audience in as clear and as complete a way as possible.

The panel may sit around one side of a table. Seat the moderator at the end of the table. If no table is available, you may choose to place the chairs in a semicircle.

Rules For The Moderator

1. State the topic or present the situation to be considered.

2. Allow each panel member an approximately equal amount of time to discuss the topic.

3. When all panel members have finished, the moderator can ask questions of the members to clarify the issues.

4. Panel members can then discuss the topic among themselves. (The moderator should keep any one member from dominating the discussion.)

Part II

Job Related Situations

My boss always tells me what is wrong with my work. He never says anything about what I do right.
My boss wants me to stay late every day but he doesn't call it overtime.
My boss is dishonest. I see my boss taking supplies home from work.
My boss is curious about my personal life. Do I have to tell him these things?
My boss is always telling me to say he isn't in when he doesn't want to talk to people.
My boss doesn't seem to listen when I make suggestions.

My boss wants me to change the record to cover a mistake he made.
My boss confuses me when he gives directions.
My boss pressures me to do things that I don't want to do.
My boss wants me to get some more training; that will mean two nights of night school a week.
My boss won't give me time off when I ask for it.
My boss is rude and inconsiderate.

I need to ask my boss for a raise.
I want to look for a better job without losing this one.
My car is broken and my boss will fire me if I miss another day's work.
I want to resign my job.
I've got a crush on my boss.
My boss has told me to do something and I don't know how to do it.

My boss comes to work mad every morning. He is usually in a better mood in the afternoon.
My boss wants me to work overtime.
My boss brags about me in front of other workers and I don't know what to say.
My boss told me to work faster or he will have to replace me.
My boss yells at me and everybody else.
My boss thinks I should know what to do without being told.

My boss is very kind but he treats me like I was a child.
My boss complains to me about other workers.
My boss is always checking up on my work. I feel that he thinks I'm not doing it right.
My boss is a big spender on expense accounts. He is taking advantage of the company.

A fellow worker insists on calling me Honey Bud. That is not my name.
A fellow worker is always making trouble for others.
A fellow worker tries to get me to do his work.
A fellow worker tries to boss me around.
A fellow worker is rude and inconsiderate.
A fellow worker lied to me about another worker.

A fellow worker steals money.
A fellow worker is always trying to borrow money.
A fellow worker is always asking for a ride home.
A fellow worker steals my lunch.
A fellow worker expects special favors because he is kin to the boss.
A fellow worker plays the radio too loud.

A fellow worker won't bathe.
A fellow worker sucks his teeth.
A fellow worker blows smoke in my face.
A fellow worker chews and spits.
A fellow worker wears strong perfume/after-shave.
A fellow worker doesn't clean up after lunch.

A fellow worker tells me how to do a job I already know how to do.
A fellow worker comes to work sick and infects everyone else.
A fellow worker doesn't do his share of the work.
A fellow worker bothers me with his personal problems.
A fellow worker misses work and I know he isn't sick.
A fellow worker always finds something wrong with what I do.

A fellow worker makes the boss mad and we all suffer.
A fellow worker talks too much. I can't do my work.
A fellow worker thinks his work is more important than the work others do.
A fellow worker does a better job. It makes the rest of us look bad.
A fellow worker makes mistakes that I have to correct.
A fellow worker gets more than his share of the tips.

A fellow worker steals my customers.
A fellow worker makes a mess and expects someone else to clean it up.
A fellow worker takes the easy job and leaves the hard work for me.
A fellow worker blames me for his mistakes.
A fellow worker is always playing practical jokes.
A fellow worker tells the boss every time I do something wrong.

A fellow worker won't talk to me.
One of the people I work with gripes all the time.
I see some of the folks I work with take home some of our products.
I have close friends at work but I've had a better job offered elsewhere. If I take the other job I'll have to leave my friends.
Some people at work are not following safety rules and I could get hurt. If I report this, I will be in trouble.
The fellow who works next to me is always using my tools.

One of my friends at work is always trying to get me to eat something wonderful she has made. I am trying to lose weight.
I never get my phone messages.
Someone I work with tells me to do things differently than the way the boss tells me to do them.
Some of my fellow workers don't speak my language.

Because I work in a restaurant my friends think they can get food free.
My friends call me at work and it really bothers my boss.
My friends stop by the place I work after school. I really don't have time to talk but I'm afraid that if I don't they'll be mad at me.
I work in a grocery store. My mother is always calling me to bring stuff home.
My brother/sister uses my car in the evening and doesn't gas up. I'm left with too little gas to get to work.
My dad is always nagging me to get a better job but I like this one I have.

My friend has been fired three times. He wants me to put in a good word for him with my boss.
My friends that don't work want me to party all night. I hate to miss out on the fun but I'm too tired to get my work done the next day.
My buddy wants me to co-sign a loan because I've got a good job.
I have a full-time job. My family still expects me to help around the house just like I did when I wasn't working.
Some of my friends want to borrow money now that I have a job.
I share an apartment and my roommate borrows my clothes and leaves them dirty. I may need them to wear to work.

My roommate keeps me awake at night with his/her stereo. I'm so sleepy it's hard to get to work on time.
I don't get along with my roommate. We live two blocks from work. I don't want to move since I don't have a car.
Every two weeks I'm on the night shift. My parents don't want me out that late.
My roommate eats everything in the refrigerator for a midnight snack. I'm left with nothing to take for lunch to work.
My parents want me to look for a job downtown. I'd rather work closer to where I live.
My uncle has offered me a part-time job. My dad is pushing me to take it for the experience. I think I could get a better job.

My clothes get very dirty because my job is messy. My mom won't let me use our washing machine.
I'm only issued one uniform for work, yet I need a clean one every day.
I have a full-time job but no savings. I need a car to get to work. I asked my dad to loan me the down payment and co-sign the note. He refused.
I have to have a clean shirt every day. My mom says that's my problem.
I'm playing in a small band. My friend wants a special price for his sister's wedding.
My friends never leave a tip when I'm their waiter.

My dad tells his friends I will give them a discount on the tires I sell where I work.
I work as a lifeguard at the community pool. My mother has promised several friends I'll teach their children to swim this summer.
I have a full-time job. I live at home. My dad wants me to pay room and board.
I'm an usher at the neighborhood theatre. My younger brother/sister hangs out at the movies on Saturday and gives me a hard time.
My mother accepts baby sitting jobs for me without checking with me first.
My car is broken and I can't get to work until it is fixed. My family can't afford repairs.

My parents won't let me go on the full day work program at school but I could get a higher paying job if I worked all day.
My day wants me to join in the family business.
No one in my family has ever gone to college. My counselor thinks I should plan a college course in computer science.
I think I ought to be able to do what I want with my salary. My family feels they should have a say.
Mom and Dad both have college degrees. I want to go to a technical school and get special training as a welder (or baker, beautician).
Mom doesn't save dinner for me the nights I work late.

YOU AND YOUR BOSS

Situations:

My boss always tells me what is wrong with my work. He never says anything about what I do right.

My boss wants me to stay late every day but he doesn't call it overtime.

My boss is dishonest. I see my boss taking supplies home from work.

My boss is curious about my personal life. Do I have to tell him these things?

My boss is always telling me to say he isn't in when he doesn't want to talk to people.

My boss doesn't seem to listen when I make suggestions.

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I need to ask my boss for a raise.

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My car is broken and my boss will fire me if I miss another day's work.

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I've got a crush on my boss.

My boss has told me to do something and I don't know how to do it.

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